

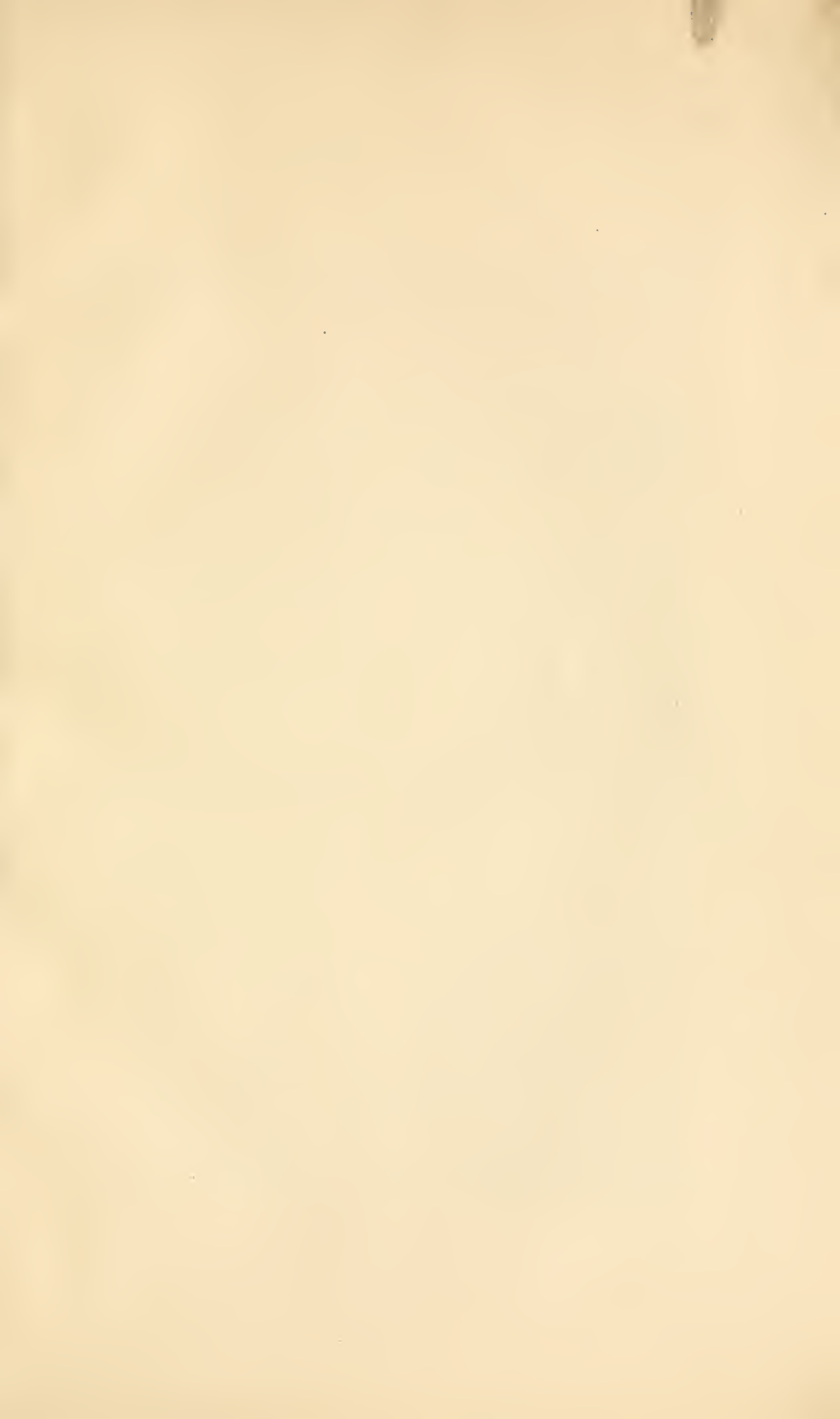
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Book 438







ADDRESS

TO THE

PEOPLE OF THE SOUTHERN STATES.

At a large meeting of Southern members of both Houses of Congress, held at the Capitol on the evening of the 7th instant, the Hon. HOPKINS L. TURNEY, of Tennessee, having been appointed Chairman at a previous meeting, took the Chair; and, on motion of the Hon. DAVID HUBBARD, of Alabama, the Hon. WM. J. ALSTON, of Alabama, was appointed Secretary.

Whereupon, the Hon. A. P. BUTLER, of South Carolina, from the Committee appointed at a preliminary meeting, reported an Address to the Southern people, recommending the establishment, at Washington City, of a Newspaper, to be devoted to the support and defence of Southern interests, which was read, and with some slight modifications, adopted.

The following resolution was offered by the Hon. THOMAS L. CLINGMAN, of North Carolina, and unanimously adopted by the meeting:

Resolved, unanimously, That the Committee, in publishing the Address, be instructed to give with it the names of the Senators and Representatives in Congress who concur in the proposition to establish the Southern organ, as manifested by their subscription to the several copies of the plan in circulation, or who may hereafter authorise said committee to include their names.

Maryland.

Senator—THOS. G. PRATT.

Virginia.

Senators—R. M. T. HUNTER,
J. M. MASON.

Representatives—

J. A. SEDDON,
THOS. H. AVERETT,
PAULUS POWELL,
R. K. MEADE,
ALEX. R. HOLLADAY,
THOS. S. BOCKOCK,
H. A. EDMUNDSON,
JEREMIAH MORTON.

North Carolina.

Senator—WILLIE P. MANGUM.

Representatives—

T. L. CLINGMAN,
A. W. VENABLE,
W. S. ASHE.

South Carolina.

Senators—A. P. BUTLER,
F. H. ELMORE.

Representatives—

JOHN MCQUEEN,
JOSEPH A. WOODWARD,
DANIEL WALLACE,
WM. F. COLCOCK,

73887
2*South Carolina—continued.*

JAMES L. ORR,
ARMISTEAD BURT,
ISAAC E. HOLMES.

Georgia.

Senators—JNO. MCP. BERRIEN,
WM. C. DAWSON.

Representatives—

JOSEPH W. JACKSON,
ALEX. H. STEPHENS,
ROBERT TOOMBS,
H. A. HARALSON,
ALLEN F. OWEN.

Alabama.

Senator—JEREMIAH CLEMENS.

Representatives—

DAVID HUBBARD,
F. W. BOWDEN,
S. W. INGE,
W. J. ALSTON,
S. W. HARRIS.

Mississippi.

Senator—JEFFERSON DAVIS.

Representatives—

W. S. FEATHERSTON,
JACOB THOMPSON,
A. G. BROWN,
W. McWILLIE.

Louisiana.

Senators—S. U. DOWNS,
PIERRE SOULE.

Representatives—

J. H. HARMANSON,
EMILE LA SERE,
ISAAC E. MORSE.

Arkansas.

Senators—SOLON BORLAND,
W. K. SEBASTIAN,

Representative—

WM. R. JOHNSON.

Texas.

Representatives—

VOLNEY E. HOWARD,
D. S. KAUFMAN.

Missouri.

Senator—D. R. ATCHISON.

Representative—

JAMES S. GREEN.

Kentucky.

Representatives—

R. H. STANTON,
JAMES L. JOHNSON.

Tennessee.

Senator—HOPKINS L. TURNEY.

Representatives—

JAMES H. THOMAS,
FRED'K P. STANTON,
C. H. WILLIAMS,
J. G. HARRIS.

Florida.

Senators—JACKSON MORTON,
D. L. YULEE.

Representative—

E. CARRINGTON CABELL.

And upon motion, the meeting adjourned.

HOPKINS L. TURNEY,

Chairman

Attest:

WM. J. ALSTON,
Secretary.

ADDRESS TO THE PEOPLE OF THE SOUTHERN STATES.

The Committee to which was referred the duty of preparing an Address to the people of the slaveholding States upon the subject of a Southern organ, to be established in the City of Washington, put forth the following :

FELLOW-CITIZENS: A number of Senators and Representatives in Congress from the Southern States of the Confederacy, deeply impressed with a sense of the dangers which beset those States, have considered carefully our means of self-defence within the Union and the Constitution, and have come to the conclusion, that it is highly important to establish in this city a paper which, without reference to political party, shall be devoted to the rights and interests of the South, so far as they are involved in the questions growing out of African slavery. To establish and maintain such a paper, your support is necessary, and accordingly we address you on the subject.

In the contest now going on, the constitutional equality of fifteen States is put in question. Some sixteen hundred millions worth of negro property is involved, directly; and, indirectly, though not less surely, an incalculable amount of property in other forms. But to say this, is to state less than half the doom that hangs over you. Your social forms and institutions, which separate the European and the African races into distinct classes, and assign to each a different sphere in society, are threatened with overthrow. Whether the negro is to occupy the same social rank with the white man, and enjoy equally with him the rights, privileges, and immunities of citizenship, in short, all the honors and dignities of society, is a question of greater moment than any mere question of property can be.

Such is the contest now going on—a contest in which public opinion, if not the prevailing, is destined to be a most prominent force, and yet no organ of the united interests of those assailed has as yet been established; nor does there exist any paper which can be the common medium for an interchange of opinions amongst the Southern States. Public opinion, as it has been formed and directed by the combined influence of interest and prejudice, is the force which has been most potent against us in the war now going on against the institution of negro slavery; and yet we have taken no effectual means to make and maintain that issue with it, upon which our safety and perhaps our social

existence depends. Whoever will look to the history of this question, and to the circumstances under which we are now placed, must see that our position is one of imminent danger, and one to be defended by all the means, moral and political, of which we can avail ourselves in the present emergency. The warfare against African slavery commenced, as it is known, with Great Britain, who, after having contributed mainly to its establishment in the new world, devoted her most earnest efforts, for purposes not yet fully explained, to its abolition in America. How wisely this was done so far as her own colonies were concerned, time has determined, and all comment upon this subject on our part would now be entirely superfluous. If, however, her purpose was to reach and embarrass us on this subject, her efforts have not been without success. A common origin, a common language, have made the English literature ours to a great extent, and the efforts of the British Government and people to mould the public opinion of all who speak the English language, have not been vain or fruitless. On the contrary, they have been deeply felt wherever the English language is spoken, and the more efficient and dangerous, because, as yet, the South has taken no steps to appear and plead at the bar of the world, before which she has been summoned, and by which she has been tried already without a hearing. Secured by constitutional guaranties, and independent of all the world, so far as its domestic institutions were concerned, the South has reposed under the consciousness of right, and independence, and forborne to plead at a bar which she knew had no jurisdiction over this particular subject. In this we have been theoretically right, but practically we have made a great mistake. All means, political, diplomatic, and literary, have been used to concentrate the public opinion, not only of the world at large, but of our own country, against us; and resting upon the undoubted truth that our domestic institutions were the subjects of no Government but our own local governments, and concerned no one but ourselves, we have been passive under these assaults, until danger menaces us from every quarter. A great party has grown up, and is increasing in the United States, which seems to think it a duty they owe to earth and heaven, to make war on a domestic institution, upon which are staked our property, our social organization, and our peace and safety. Sectional feelings have been invoked, and those who wield the power of this Government have been tempted almost, if not quite beyond their power of resistance, to wage a war against our property, our rights, and our social system, which, if successfully prosecuted, must end in our destruction. Every inducement, the love of power, the desire to accomplish what are, with less truth than plausibility, called "reforms," all are offered to tempt them to press upon those who are represented, and, in fact, seem to be an easy prey to the spoiler.

Our equality under the Constitution is in effect denied, our social institutions are derided and contemned, and ourselves treated with contumely and scorn through all the avenues which have as yet been opened to the public opinion of the world. That these assaults should have had their effect is not surprising, when we remember that as yet we have offered no organized resistance to them, and opposed but little, except the isolated efforts of members of Congress who have occasionally raised their voices against what they believed to be wrongs and injustice.

It is time that we should meet and maintain an issue in which we find ourselves involved by those who make war upon us in regard to every interest that is peculiar to us, and which is not enjoyed in common with them, however guarantied by solemn compact, and no matter how vitally involving our prosperity, happiness, and safety. It is time that we should take measures to defend ourselves against assaults, which can end in nothing short of our destruction if we oppose no resistance to them. Owing to accidental circumstances, and a want of knowledge of the true condition of things in the Southern States, the larger portion of the press and of the political literature of the world has been directed against us. The moral power of public opinion carries political strength along with it, and, if against us, we must wrestle with it or fall. If, as we firmly believe, Truth is with us, there is nothing to discourage us in such an effort.

The eventual strength of an opinion is to be measured not by the number who may chance to entertain it, but by the truth which sustains it; we believe, nay, we know, that truth is with us, and therefore we should not shrink from the contest. We have too much staked upon it to shrink or to tremble—a property interest, in all its forms, of incalculable amount and value; the social organization, the equality, the liberty, nay, the existence of fourteen or fifteen States of the Confederacy—all rest upon the result of the struggle in which we are engaged. We must maintain the equality of our political position in the Union. We must maintain the dignity and respectability of our social position before the world; and we must maintain and secure our liberty and rights, so far as our united efforts can protect them; and, if possible, we must effect all this within the pale of the Union, and by means known to the Constitution. The Union of the South upon these vital interests is necessary, not only for the sake of the South, but perhaps for the sake of the Union. We have great interests exposed to the assaults, not only of the world at large, but of those who, constituting the majority, wield the power of our own Confederate States. We must defend those interests by all legitimate means, or else perish either in, or without, the effort. To make a successful defence, we must unite with each other upon the one vital question, and make the most

of our political strength. We must do more—we must go beyond our entrenchments, and meet even the more distant and indirect, but by no means harmless assaults, which are directed against us. We, too, can appeal to public opinion. Our assailants act upon theory—to their theory we can oppose experience. They reason upon an imaginary state of things—to this we may oppose truth and actual knowledge. To do this, however, we too must open up avenues to the public mind; we, too, must have an organ through which we can appeal to the world, and commune with each other. The want of such an organ heretofore, has been, perhaps, one of the leading causes of our present condition.

There is no paper at the seat of Government through which we can hear or be heard fairly and truly by the country. There is a paper here which makes the abolition of slavery its main and paramount end. There are other papers here which make the maintenance of political parties their supreme and controlling object, but none which consider the preservation of sixteen hundred millions of property, the equality and liberty of fourteen or fifteen States, the protection of the white man against African equality, as paramount over or even equal to the maintenance of some political organization which is to secure a President; and who is an object of interest, not because he will certainly rule or perhaps ruin the South, but chiefly for the reason that he will possess and bestow office and spoils. The South has a peculiar position, and her important rights and interests are objects of continual assault from the majority; and the party press, dependent as it is, upon that majority for its means of living, will always be found laboring to excuse the assailants, and to paralyze all efforts at resistance. How is it now? The abolition party can always be heard through its press at the seat of Government, but through what organ or press at Washington, can Southern men communicate with the world, or with each other, upon their own peculiar interests? So far from writing or permitting any thing to be written, which is calculated to defend the rights of the South, or state truly its case, the papers here are engaged in lulling the South into a false security, and in manufacturing there an artificial public sentiment, suitable for some Presidential platform, though at the expense of any and every interest you may possess, no matter how dear or how vital and momentous.

This state of things results from party obligations, and a regard to party success. And they but subserve the ends of their establishment, in consulting their own interests and the advancement of the party to which they are pledged. You cannot look to them as sentinels over interests that are repugnant to the feelings of the majority of a self-sustaining party.

In the Federal legislature, the South has some voice and some votes, but in the public press, as it now stands at the seat of Gov-

ernment, the North has a controlling influence. The press of this city takes its tone from that of the North. Even our Southern press is subjected more or less to the same influence. Our public men, yes, our Southern men, owe their public standing and reputation too often to the commendation and praise of the Northern press. Southern newspapers republish from their respective party organs in this city, and in so doing reproduce, unconscious, doubtless, in most instances, of the wrong they do, the Northern opinion in relation to public men and measures. How dangerous such a state of things must be to the fidelity of your representatives it is needless to say! They are but men, and it would be unwise to suppose that they are beyond the reach of temptations which influence the rest of mankind.

Fellow Citizens : It rests with ourselves to alter this state of things, so far as the South is concerned. We have vast interests which we are bound by many considerations to defend with all the moral and political means in our power. One of the first steps to this great end, is to establish a Southern organ here, a paper through which we may commune with one another, and the world at large. We do not propose to meddle with political parties as they now exist ; we wish to enlist every Southern man in a Southern cause, and in defence of Southern rights, be he Whig or be he Democrat. We do not propose to disturb them, or to shake him in his party relations. All that we ask is, that he shall consider the constitutional rights of the South, which are involved in the great abolition movement, as paramount to all party and all other political considerations. And surely the time has come when all Southern men should unite for purposes of self defence. Our relative power in the legislature of the Union is diminishing with every census, the dangers which menace us are daily becoming greater, and the chief instrument in the assaults upon us is the public press, over which, owing to our supineness, the North exercises a controlling influence. So far as the South is concerned, we can change and reverse this state of things. It is not to be borne that public sentiment at the South should be stifled or controlled by the party press.

Let us have a press of our own, as the North has, both here and at home—a press which shall be devoted to Southern rights, and animated by Southern feeling ; which shall look not to the North, but the South, for the tone which is to pervade it. Claiming our share of power in Federal legislation, let us also claim our share of influence in the press of the country. Let us organize in every Southern town and county, so as to send this paper into every house in the land. Let us take, too, all the means necessary to maintain the paper by subscription, so as to increase its circulation, and promote the spread of knowledge and truth. Let every portion of the South furnish its full quota of

talent and money to sustain a paper which ought to be supported by all, because it will be devoted to the interest of every Southern man. It will be the earnest effort of the Committee who are charged with these arrangements, to procure editors of high talent and standing; and they will also see that the paper is conducted without *opposition* and without *reference* to the political parties of the day. With these assurances, we feel justified in calling upon you, the people of the Southern States, to make the necessary efforts to establish and maintain the proposed paper.

A. P. BUTLER,
JACKSON MORTON,
R. TOOMBS,
J. THOMPSON.

MAY 6, 1850.

Any person wishing to become a subscriber to the paper, the price of which will be moderate, can send his name, and that of his post-office, to his Representative in Congress, without waiting for the Prospectus to be published.

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